"FRIEND" MICHIGAN STATE INDUSTRIES ON FACEBOOK

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MONEYBALL is a biographical sports film starring Brad Pitt and based on the Michael Lewis book by the same name. The movie portrays Billy Beane, the general manager of the Oakland Athletics baseball team, who needed a way to find players and achieve success with limited resources and finances. Rather than using conventional recruiting means, Beane utilized computer technology to fill his roster. Convincing others that this methodology would actually work was not easy. But once Beane put this plan into motion, the A's went on to win twenty consecutive games and set an American League record.





Many of you probably don't have limited resources and finances, narrow markets, and harsh economic conditions like we do here in the state of Michigan. But if you do, maybe we can share some information about our "Moneyball" approach to technology and how we began to successfully integrate social media into our sales & marketing mix.

In 2010 Michigan State Industries (MSI) formed a team to determine how to use our own computer generated tools to market our products and services, as well as communicate to our current and prospective customers. MSI made the decision to join the social network community on Facebook.

The term "community" has been used as a catchphrase often connected with the Internet ... any website or web-based application was supposed to provide a forum for communication and interaction. That promise of community has really been unfulfilled until the recent social media revolution as seen on Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites.

The idea of using social media surfaced from our team brainstorming session on "Communication-Best Practices." MSI decided that using social media would not only increase reliability and build its image, but effectively increase revenues and customers.

The opportunity to engage in social media was offered to MSI through the State of Michigan information technology department. State agencies were encouraged to create profiles on Facebook pages. A Facebook page is a public profile that enables you to share your business and products with other Facebook users. A business category is selected which best fits your organization. MSI is located under the "Government Organizations" category. The MSI Facebook page offered ways to define our

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target audience and reach customers based on demographics such as age, location and interests.

MSI developed the following strategies to move forward with creating a business profile:

- The page must represent MSI's products and mission
- Staff would need to post regularly in order to develop deeper relationships with customers
- Expand our reach by posting a link to our Facebook page on our website, flyers, business cards, etc.

- Set goals to shape page posts and ensure they are useful and relevant
- Create ads that focus and target the appropriate audience

In today's society it appears that having a simple website is no longer enough. Research has shown that social media provides an avenue for businesses to market their products as well as their services, contract new customers, and maintain their current customer base in order to succeed. As we all know, marketing and advertising is the key to any business success. And while most business was initially driven by direct sales, the evolution of marketing brought on new promotional tactics such as



print advertising, electronic advertising (e-mail and web banner ads) and now social media has become the next promotional tool for marketers to use to find customers. Social media makes it possible to fine tune our message to a more targeted group of appropriate customers as well as figure out better ways to meet the needs of those customers.

Next steps for MSI are implementing Twitter ... ISSUU ... and iContact.

So "Friend" us on Facebook! We'll help you create your own sales and marketing "Moneyball" success.

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